

R.

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The JACKDAW of RHEIM



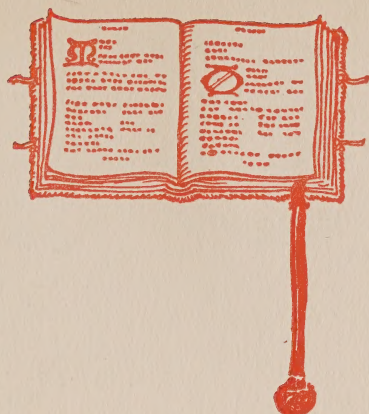
*From The Ingoldsby Legends
With Drawings by
George Wharton Edwards*

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From the
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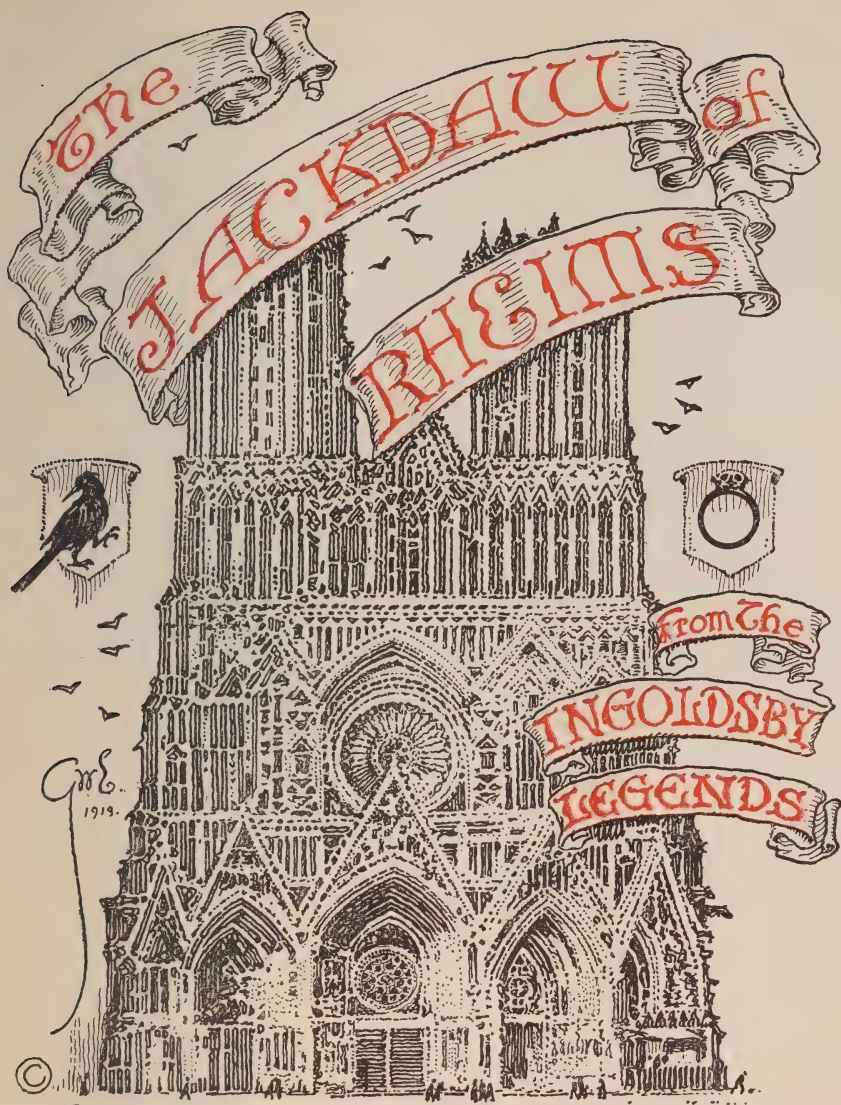


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The
JACKMAN of
RHIMD.





With an Accompaniment of Drawings by
GEORGE WHARTON EDWARDS

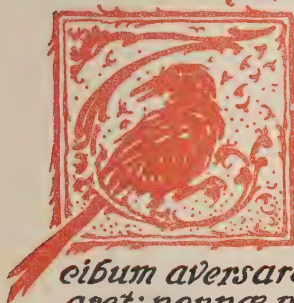
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The JACKDAW of RHIMS ~ ~ ~



une miser *Corvus* adeo
conscientiae stimulis
compunctus fuit et ex-
ecratio eum tantopere
excarneficavit ut exinde
tabescere inciperet, ma-
ciem contraheret, omnem
cibum aversaretur, nec amplius crocit-
aret: pennae praeterea ei defluebant,
et alis pendulis omnes facetias in-
termisit, et tam macer apparuit ut
omnes ejus miserescerent?
'Tunc abbas sacerdotibus man-
davit ut rursus furem absolverent;
quo facto, *Corvus*, omnibus mir-
antibus, prope diem convaluit et
pristinam sanitatem recuperavit?



(De Illust. Ord. Cisterc)





THE JACKDAW

Sat on

the Cardinal's chair !
Bishop, and abbot, and
prior were there ;
Many a monk, and many a friar,
Many a knight, and many a
squire,

With a great many more of lesser degree, —

In sooth, a goodly company ;

And they served the Lord Primate

on bended knee.

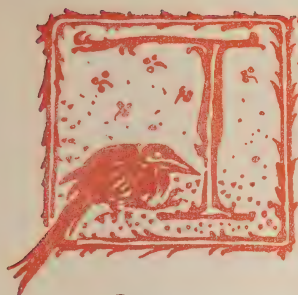
Never, I ween,

Was a prouder seen,

Read of in books, or dreamt of in dreams,

Than the Cardinal Lord Archbishop of Rheims!





IN and OUT

Through the motley rout,
That little Jackdaw kept
hopping about ;
Here and there,
Like a dog in a fair,

Over comfits and cates,
And dishes and plates,
Cowl and cope, and rochet and pall,
Mitre and crosier ! he hopp'd upon all !





WITH A saucy air,
He perch'd on the chair
Where, in state, the great
Lord Cardinal sat
In the great Lord Cardinal's
great red hat;
And he peer'd in the face

Of his Lordship's Grace
With a satisfied look, as if he would say,
"We Two are the greatest folks here to-day!"
And the priests, with awe,
As such freaks they saw,
Said, "The Devil must be in that little
Jackdaw!!"





THE FEAST Was over,
the board was clear'd,
The flawns and the custards
had all disappear'd,
And six little Singing-boys, —
dear little souls !

In nice clean faces, and nice white stoles,

Came, in order due,

Two by two,

Marching that grand refectory through !

A nice little boy held a golden ewer,

Emboss'd, and fill'd with water, as pure

As any that flows between Rheims and

Namur,

Which a nice little boy stood ready to catch

In a fine golden hand-basin made to match.





WONIC& Little boys,
rather more grown,
Carried lavender-water, and
eau de Cologne;
And a nice little boy had a
nice cake of soap,

Worthy of washing the hands of the Pope.

One little boy more

A napkin bore,

Of the best white diaper, fringed with pink,

And a Cardinal's Hat, mark'd in "permanent
ink."





THE GREAT Lord

Cardinal turns at the sight
Of these nice little boys
dress'd all in white:
From his finger he draws
His costly turquoise;
And, not thinking at all about little Jackdaws,
Deposits it straight
By the side of his plate,
While the nice little boys on his Eminence
wait;
Till, when nobody's dreaming of any such
thing,
That little Jackdaw hops off with the ring!

* * * * *





HERE'S A CRY And a
shout,

And a deuce of a rout,
And nobody seems to know
what they 're about,
But the monks have their
pockets all turn'd inside out;

The friars are kneeling,
And hunting, and feeling
The carpet, the floor, and the walls, and the
ceiling.

The Cardinal drew
Off each plum-colour'd shoe,
And left his red stockings exposed to the view ;





PEEPS, And he

feels

In the toes and the heels ;

They turn up the dishes,

— they turn up the
plates, —

They take up the poker and poke out the
grates,

— They turn up the rugs,

They examine the mugs : —

But, no ! — no such thing ; —

They can't find THE RING !

And the Abbot declared that, “when nobody
twigg'd it,

Some rascal or other had popp'd in, and
prigg'd it ! ”





THE CARDINAL Rose

with a dignified look,
He call'd for his candle, his
bell, and his book !
In holy anger, and pious
grief,

He solemnly cursed that rascally thief!
He cursed him at board, he cursed him in bed ;
From the sole of his foot to the crown of his
head ;

He cursed him in sleeping, that every night
He should dream of the devil, and wake in
a fright ;

He cursed him in eating, he cursed him in
drinking,

He cursed him in coughing, in sneezing, in
winking ;

He cursed him in sitting, in standing, in lying ;
He cursed him in walking, in riding, in flying,
He cursed him living, he cursed him dying !—
Never was heard such a terrible curse !!

But, what gave rise
To no little surprise,
Nobody seem'd one penny the worse !

"That's him!"





HIS DAY Was gone,
The night came on,
The Monks and the Friars
they search'd till dawn;
When the Sacristan saw,
On crumpled claw,
Come limping a poor little lame Jackdaw!
No longer gay,
As on yesterday;
His feathers all seem'd to be turn'd the wrong
way;—
His pinions droop'd, —he could hardly
stand,—
His head was as bald as the palm of your
hand;
His eye so dim,
So wasted each limb,
That, heedless of grammar, they all cried,
“THAT'S HIM! —





HATS THE SCAMP

that has done this scandalous
thing!

That's the thief that has got
my Lord Cardinal's Ring!"—

The poor little Jackdaw,

When the monks he saw,

Feebly gave vent to the ghost of a caw;

And turn'd his bald head, as much as to say,

"Pray, be so good as to walk this way!"





LOWER And

slower
He limp'd on before,
Till they came to the back of
the belfry-door,
Where the first thing they
saw,

Midst the stocks and the straw,
Was the RING, in the nest of that little
Jackdaw!





HEN THE GREAT

Lord Cardinal call'd for his
book,
And off that terrible curse he
took ;

The mute expression
Served in lieu of confession,
And, being thus coupled with full restitution,
The Jackdaw got plenary absolution !
— When those words were heard,
That poor little bird
Was so changed in a moment, 't was really
absurd :





HE GREW Sleek, and
fat;

In addition to that,
A fresh crop of feathers came
thick as a mat!

His tail waggled more

Even than before;

But no longer it wagg'd with an impudent air,
No longer he perch'd on the Cardinal's chair.





& HOPP'D Now
about

With a gait devout;
At Matins, at Vespers, he
never was out;
And, so far from any more
pilfering deeds,

He always seem'd telling the Confessor's
beads.

If any one lied, — or if any one swore, —
Or slumber'd in pray'r-time and happen'd
to snore,

That good Jackdaw

Would give a great "Caw!"

As much as to say, "Don't do so any more!"
While many remark'd, as his manners they
saw,

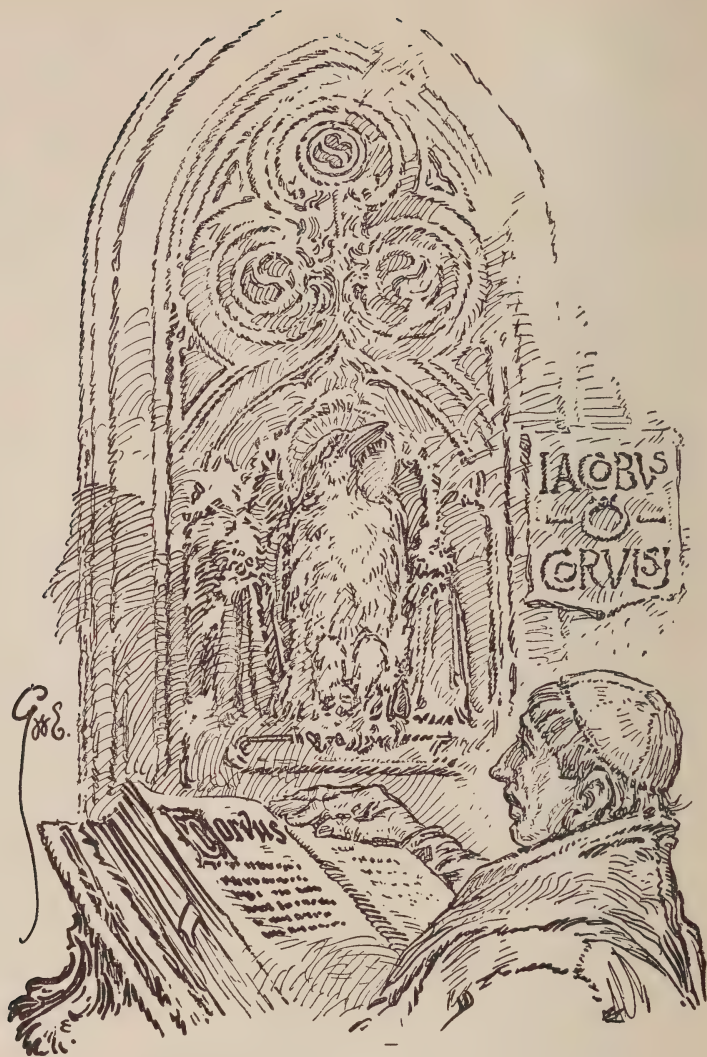
That they "never had known such a pious
Jackdaw!"

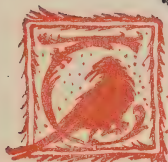




& LONG Lived the
pride
Of that country side,
And at last in the odour of
sanctity died;
When, as words were too
faint

His merits to paint,
The Conclave determined to make him a
Saint;
And on newly-made Saints and Popes, as you
know,
It's the custom, at Rome, new names to
bestow,
So they canonized him by the name of Jem
Crow!





The Story of the JACKDAW of RHEIMS

The story of the Jackdaw of Rheims is to be found in "Johan. Wolfi Lectionum Memorabilium Centenarii," vol. 1, p. 216. The same volume contains the original story of Southey's "Pilgrims of Compostella"; and on the same page with the latter there is given a legend of St. Patrick, who, when a man had stolen some mutton, detected the thief by making the sheep bleat in his inside. (T. L.)

In writing to Mrs. Hughes on the 29th of April, 1837, Mr. Barham refers to this, probably the most popular of legends, in the following terms: "I have no time to do more for this number [of "Bentley's Miscellany"] than scratch off a doggerel version of an old Catholic legend that I picked up out of a high Dutch author. I am afraid the poor 'Jackdaw' will be sadly pecked at. Had I more time I meant to have engrafted on it a story I have heard Cannon tell of a magpie of his acquaintance." The story is given at length in the "Life and Letters," vol. 2, p. 21.

In a subsequent letter to Mr. Bentley he says: "I am glad you like the 'Jackdaw'; it was struck off at a heat and almost in despair, when I found it impossible to finish the other article ["The Spectre of Tappington" ?] in time."

Happily for the present generation, the memory of Mr. Rice, the great American comedian, and his interminable "nigger" song, "Jim Crow," has passed away. The time was, some thirty years ago, when this fearful composition seemed to pervade all space. It was sung, shouted, howled, and danced — *semper ubique et ab omnibus*! A certain clever scholar of the Father Prout variety pronounced it a plagiarism, and professed to have discovered the original in a French chanson, which is given at length in "Bentley's Miscellany," April, 1839. A stanza may suffice as a specimen: —

En Amérique j'ai fait des sauts,
 En Angleterre aussi;
 En France j'irai s'il le faut,
 Pour sauter quand je cris, —
 Je tourne, re-tourne, je caracole,
 Je fais des sauts;
 Chaque fois je fais la tour,
 Je saute "Jim Crow."

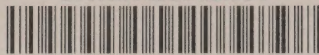
The audacity of the famous Jackdaw of Rheims has been equalled if not excelled at Monkton in Kent. During the divine service a jackdaw (now belonging to Mr. Stapleton Cotton) made its way into the church with the other portion of the congregation, and not only took a lively part in the responses, but also became exceedingly talkative at other times. The whole congregation were disposed to explode with merriment; the clergyman himself with difficulty kept a serious face; while the school children present broke out into open laughter. Things became so bad that the clergyman had to order the children out of the church. Then an effort was made to capture the intruder, who had perched himself boldly upon the reading-desk.

The bird, however, was not to be caught, and flew to the rafters above, where it remained until the end of the service, still continuing to deliver itself of more or less pertinent expressions of opinion.

("St. James's Gazette," 25th
August, 1888.)



· The End ·



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